Recycling vs. Wishcycling

Recycling is not only a way to protect and conserve our natural sources, it is a critical part of the U.S. economy, contributing to jobs, wages and government tax revenue. However, knowing which waste is recyclable and which isn't, can be confusing. Even items with the triangle recycle symbol, may not be able to be recycled at your local transfer station or waste facility. It's possible that the item was made of recycled material as opposed to being recyclable itself. Sometimes guessing about what is recyclable and what isn't can cause more harm than simply throwing the item in the trash. Placing materials into the recycling stream hoping it will meet the local criteria, is known as "wishcycling."

In New York State, **80%** of people think that items with the recycling symbol on them are recyclable, which is NOT always true.

AVOID WISHCYCLING
(putting things in your recycling cart that don't belong)
THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP

Sometimes guessing about what is recyclable and what isn't can cause more harm than simply throwing the item in the trash. Placing materials into the recycling stream hoping it will meet the local criteria, is known as "wishcycling." Common items that are wishcycled are plastic bags, Styrofoam®, single use plasticware, straws and items with food or drink residue. When a load of recyclables are contaminated with trash, the entire load and even future loads can be effected. Plastic bags, straws and other items can clog or cause damage to machines in recycling facilities.

Facility employees sort through the waste to prevent as much contamination as possible. With the amount of waste that goes through a recycling facility, it is impossible to catch every contaminate. Some facilities estimate that up to 20% of contaminates do not get removed from the waste stream. As citizens, we are responsible for knowing what can be recycled in our area and where our remaining items can be disposed of. In order to be successful in our waste disposal, we must first be informed. For guidance on what is recyclable and what is not, review our Dutchess County recycling guide and our pamphlet on hard to recycling and dispose of items for more information.

Wherever you go, know the local recycling rules.
#RecycleRightNY

solidwastemgmt@dutchessny.gov   www.dutchessny.gov/solidwaste